

The 13th Coordination Committee Meeting

Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating
Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing in the Region

16 November 2020

Summary Report

Opening Session

The 13th Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing in the Region (RPOA-IUU) Coordination Committee (CC) Meeting was attended by 10 (ten) RPOA-IUU participating countries namely Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Timor Leste and Viet Nam. Thailand was not able to attend the meeting. The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), FAO-APFIC, and InfoFish also attended the meeting as an Advisory Bodies to the RPOA-IUU; IMCSN, NOAA-OLE, CTI-CFF, CSIRO, and ATSEA-2 project were the observers during the meeting.

In addition, for reference, the detailed information of participants who attended virtual the 13th Coordination Committee Meeting will be informed in **Annex 1**. To ensure communication between the RPOA-IUU participating countries and the RPOA-IUU Secretariat, the updated lists of RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee are shown in **Annex 2**.

The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Ben Mitchell; Director, Fisheries Governance and Trade Section; Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment; Australia and Mr. Arip Hidayatulloh (RPOA-IUU Secretariat); Assistant Director of Law, Organisation and Public Relations; Directorate General Surveillance for Marine Resources Management; Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF); Indonesia

Mr. Lourenco Dos Reis Amaral; National Directorate of Fisheries Inspection; DG of Fisheries-Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries; Timor Leste delivered welcome remarks. He mentioned that this meeting unlike the previous meeting, has been limited due to Covid-19. He reminded the CCM of the problems caused by IUU fishing such as fish stock depletion, marine habitats destruction and economic loss, and that these issues cannot be solved by just one country but also required regional and international cooperation. He also mentioned that Timor Leste is committed to cooperating with other countries in the region as a signatory to the RPOA-IUU. Moreover, Timor-Leste also recognises the importance of data and information sharing to minimize the number of IUU fishing activities.

The welcoming remarks of Mr. Lourenco Dos Reis Amaral are available in the **Annex 3**.

Mr. Suharta, Secretary Directorate General Surveillance for Marine Resources Management - Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) Indonesia, as RPOA-IUU Secretariat Coordinator, also delivered some welcoming remarks. He expressed the highest gratitude and deeply appreciated the RPOA-IUU CC representatives from participating countries, RPOA-IUU advisory bodies, observers and other participants who have shown their commitment to the RPOA-IUU regardless of the limitations resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Mr. Suharta also noted that Covid-19 presented new challenges for our efforts to combat IUU fishing as it hinders

the implementation of effective fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS). He stated that the commitment and cooperation in the region to promote responsible fishing practices, including combatting IUU fishing, should continue regardless of the circumstances.

The welcoming remarks of Mr. Suharta are available in the **Annex 4**.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the meeting

Mr. Ben Mitchell delivered a brief introduction to the RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee. He outlined the annual RPOA-IUU CC Meeting continued to be the forum in which we review progress against the RPOA-IUU's 2019-2020 work plan, shared reports on the implementation of core elements of RPOA-IUU and developed an agreed RPOA-IUU 2020-2021 work plan.

1.2. Adoption of Agenda

The draft agenda was adopted.

The adopted agenda is available in **Annex 5**.

2. Regional outlook and priorities

Mr. Simon Funge-Smith, Senior Fisheries Officer, FAO APFIC presented a brief overview of FAO activities to support actions on combating IUU fishing in the region and on a study to assess the level of illegal fishing in the region.

He outlined the FAO's global program to support the implementation of PSMA. The program is focused on the implementation of the PSMA and regional mechanisms to combat IUU fishing. FAO noted that many RPOA-IUU countries are parties to the PSMA. FAO also mentioned its commitment on providing assistance on the implementation of PSMA for RPOA-IUU countries if required.

Mr. Funge-Smith informed participants on the FAO APFIC report on IUU fishing in the Asia Pacific region. The initial study was conducted in 2015 and the database for the study was derived from information provided by key people on the illegal fishing activities that occurred in their national waters, media analysis, and from other methods. He added that the study was becoming a more rigorous and deeper study, as requested by the APFIC member countries. The continuation of the study is being conducted in collaboration with CSIRO. The findings focused on the illegal component of IUU fishing which included hotspots of illegal fishing, estimated value of illegal fishing landings and illegal catches. The studies also confirmed the majority of the illegal fishing identified was undertaken by foreign vessels and occurred especially around disputed border areas, linked to stock depletion, and caused by the regulatory gaps. He highlighted the main recommendations of the study that were also suitable for RPOA-IUU countries as the need to establish a transparent and cost effective approach to benchmark illegal fishing and to improve the actions to combat illegal fishing, develop guidance on legal and regulatory reform to address the structural alignment between industry and regulation, increase capacity building of enforcement agencies, and promote and develop an information sharing platform among countries.

FAO's statement can be found in **Annex 6**.

3. Presentation of Reports

3.1 RPOA-IUU Secretariat

Mr. Arip Hidayatulloh from the RPOA-IUU Secretariat presented the RPOA-IUU Secretariat's report. He highlighted the implementation progress of RPOA-IUU Secretariat in 2019-2020 including the role of the Secretariat to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the RPOA-IUU's 11 core elements, including circulating information regarding the RPOA-IUU Watch List, updating the RPOA-IUU website, circulating and elaborating on the joint commitment draft and intergrating feedback from member countries. He also reported the progress of the Ministerial Joint Statement, and Evaluation and Reporting Tool. The RPOA-IUU Secretariat also highlighted some challenges experienced by the RPOA-IUU Secretariat including issues and limitations caused by Covid-19, the change of RPOA-IUU contact points, and limited data and information sharing on IUU fishing vessels.

The RPOA-IUU Secretariat presentation is in **Annex 7**.

3.2 RPOA-IUU Participating Countries

Australia

The Australian delegation encouraged the RPOA-IUU participating countries to remain resilient in combatting IUUF fishing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The delegation explained Australia legislative updates, and its ongoing review of the Fisheries Management Act 1991 and the Fisheries Management Regulations. The delegation informed the CCM that Australia has adopted Harvest Strategy and Bycatch Policies and Guidelines. In terms of MCS action, the delegation explained Australia's domestic and regional activities. Domestically, Australia showed some success in combatting IUU fishing activities in its own waters. Regionally, Australia continued to share information on MCS activities. The delegation mentioned Australia's active engagement in RFMOs and similar bodies. The delegation mentioned the design and consultation phases of its new program of regional support-*Combating IUU Fishing and Promoting Sustainable Fisheries in Southeast Asia*. Finally, the delegation encouraged countries to ratify and implement the PSMA.

Australia's presentation is in **Annex 8**.

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam delegation expressed their commitment and support for the objectives of RPOA-IUU towards the promotion of responsible fishing practices including combating IUUF activities in the SEA region. The Brunei Darussalam delegation updated the activities implemented in order to combat IUU fishing as referred to the RPOA-IUU workplan including the number of illegal fishing vessels apprehended, participation in several capacity building programs and activities, reviewing national fisheries legislations, continued the participation in the implementation of RFVR and ASEAN Catch Documentation Schemes. Other activities that were mentioned included the establishment of maritime security committee and regular sea patrol operations. Finally, Brunei Darussalam stated its continuing commitment to work with the RPOA-IUU and its participating countries.

Brunei Darussalam's presentation is in **Annex 9**.

Cambodia

The delegation informed that Cambodia acknowledged the Marine Fisheries Policy Statement, Fisheries Law, NPOA-IUU for 2020-2024, and NPCI-MF for 2020-2024. Cambodia will also implement CapFish-Capture program that was funded by EU. The Cambodia delegation mentioned that Cambodia has ratified PSMA and UNFSA and will designate the fishing port for foreign fishing vessels with technical support from FAO. The Cambodian delegation mentioned that Cambodia has nominated the focal point for implementing PSMA's technical issue and IUU/PSMA, prepared a roadmap for MCS implementation and established the VSM with GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication).

Cambodia's presentation is in **Annex 10**.

Indonesia

The Indonesia delegation provided the legislative update in Indonesia through Omnibus Law that simplify the business owner and investor in marine and fisheries sector. He also mentioned that Indonesia continue to renew the existence of task force to combat illegal fishing and stated that Indonesia has ratified the PSMA (President Decree 43/2016). Delegation also informed the CCM that the designated ports, capacity building, and inspection of foreign vessels had been developed for implementing PSMA. He stated that Indonesia is still actively monitoring and inspecting the IUUF vessels during pandemic. Indonesia also implemented measures for tracing fisheries product through Catch Certification System and electronic logbook (e-logbook).

Indonesia 's presentation is in **Annex 11**.

Malaysia

The Malaysia delegation stated that Malaysia had completed institutional and legal framework gap analysis for possible accession to Port State Measures Agreement and UNFSA. Malaysia is currently under taking the effort to improve Fisheries Act 1985, particularly to ensure the effectiveness in discharging its duty as flag and port state. Delegation also mentioned that Malaysia had updated the data of fishing vessels in the Global Record and the RFVR. He then highlighted that Malaysia flagged-fishing vessels are required to install the Mobile Tracking Unit (MTU) as the control measures. Malaysia published two (2) designated ports for tuna landing in IOTC websites, namely Langkawi Port and Penang Port. Malaysia continued to actively cooperate in RFMOs and relevant regional bodies and is in the midst to develop e-ACDS with SEAFDEC assistance.

Malaysia's presentation is in **Annex 12**.

Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea fully implemented the PSMA on all fishing fleets. Delegation stated that Papua New Guinea established CDS scheme implementation. Papua New Guinea also put efforts into MCS through developing compliance monitoring scheme (CMS) process, science committee

(SC), and technical compliance committee (TCC). The delegation informed that Papua New Guinea maximizes legislative updates, use of iFIMS, sea and aerial surveillance patrols and capacity building. Papua New Guinea works together with FFS on addressing gaps on MCS.

Papua New Guinea's presentation is in **Annex 13**.

Philippines

The delegation stated that Philippines had strengthened legal, administrative, and policy frameworks of sustainable fisheries management including combating IUU fishing. Delegation informed that Philippines conduct the continuous training of MCS. Philippines continued to follow the EU 1005/2008 Catch Certification Scheme for exporting fishery products. Through assistance from FAO, Philippines worked on Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) related to the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures. Delegation provided information about active participation in relevant RFMOs including WCPFC, IOTC, ICCAT and the ASEAN Fisheries Working Group including SEAFDEC

Philippines's presentation is in **Annex 14**.

Singapore

The Singapore delegate updated that the policies for Singapore's Fisheries Act legislative amendments was approved in June 2019 and updated that the Fisheries Act Amendment is targetted to complete in 2022. Singapore coordinated IUUF matters at the national level through the Inter-Agency Working Group for IUUF. Singapore also shared on the continuous efforts in cooperation with RFMOs including CCAMLR, ICCAT, and CCBST. Through SFA, Singapore maintains a list of licensed commercial fishing vessels and will continue to upload relevant data to the SEAFDEC RFVR and the FAO Global Record. Singapore has designated the fishery ports for all fishing vessels to berth and land fish in Singapore. This information is available on the Singapore Food Agency website.

Singapore's presentation is in **Annex 15**.

Thailand

Thailand was unable to attend the meeting and the country report can be found in the annex.

Please refer to **Annex 16** to obtain information on the implementation of RPOA-IUU Work Plan 2020 from Thailand.

Timor Leste

The Timor Leste delegation reported the implementation of its National Fisheries Strategic Plan, Revision of fisheries legislation, Pilot project of PDS devices, Data entering 14 fisheries enumerator and monitoring IUU-Fishing throughout Global Fishing Watch and VIIRS, conducting FGD for national actions Development in combatting IUU fishing in ATS region, conducting consultation with strategic development group, conducting capacity building programs.

Timor Leste’s presentation is in **Annex 17**.

Viet Nam

The Viet Nam delegation updated the PSMA implementation through designating twelve (12) ports and actions on inspections and communication with the flag state. Viet Nam has established a Fisheries Inspection and Control Office to monitor the border security and catch landing and installed VMS for fishing vessels of 15 m in-length and over. Viet Nam has strengthened the joint inspection and control with Fisheries Resources Surveillance, Coast Guard, Border Guard and Navy. Viet Nam also improved the legality of capture fishery products through implementing electronic traceability. The delegation also explained that Viet Nam has regulated a new Fisheries Law on Decision No. 375/QĐ-TTg regarding the capture fishery industry.

Vietnam’s presentation is in **Annex 18**.

3.3 RPOA-IUU MCS Sub-Regional Groups

The three sub-regional MCS groups reported on their activities and key issues.

a. Gulf of Thailand (Thailand, Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Malaysia)

Thailand was unable to attend this meeting. The report of Gulf of Thailand will be reported in the next meeting. Thailand was unable to attend this meeting. The report of Gulf of Thailand will be reported in the next meeting.

Cambodia delegation informed that the Gulf of Thailand meeting is not organized due to Covid-19 situation. Malaysia delegation expressed the intention to host 10th Gulf of Thailand Sub-Regional Meeting.

b. Southern and Eastern Area of the South China Sea and Sulu-Sulawesi Seas (Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and the Philippines)

The Malaysian delegation on behalf of the Sub-Regional Secretariat couldn’t deliver report on sub-regional activities. Delegation also informed that the 7th SEACS and SSS Sub Regional Meeting is not conducted this year due to the changes of the Philippines focal point. The Philippines delegation stated to as soon as possible change RPOA-IUU focal point. Indonesia is willing to be the host for the next sub-regional meeting.

c. Arafura– Timor Seas (Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste)

The Australian delegation on behalf of Sub Regional Group highlighted that the engagement between sub-regional participating countries still continued in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic and the commitment for sharing the data and information is still progressing. The delegation also stated that the IUUF activity was being detected in the Dogleg Area and marine debris was increasing. He also informed that participating countries were willing to actively share data and information of their country’s investigations on the suspected IUU fishing vessels. The delegation also noted that the technology associated with MCS is very challenging and encouraged other sub-regional groups to attend MCS-ATSEA meeting.

The MCS sub regional working group presentations are at **Annex 19**.

3.4 RPOA-IUU Advisory Bodies/partners:

a. SEAFDEC

SEAFDEC representatives stated that SEAFDEC enhanced the utilization and improvement of RFVR database and capacity building for the PSMA implementation. The activities of RFVR included the consultation and improvement of the platform and database. The SEAFDEC representative also informed that SEAFDEC will conduct capacity building for MCS implementation and workshops on topics relevant to legality for PSMA implementation in 2021 and 2023. SEAFDEC planned to extend the development of eACDS in ASEAN member countries. SEAFDEC is seeking to organize workshops on RFVR focusing on developing of a platform for its database.

SEAFDEC's presentation is in **Annex 20**.

b. Infish

Representatives noted Infish provided services for fish marketing to private industry and government. Infish highlighted its core activities including consultation, workshops/seminars, and capacity building. Representatives informed that Infish and SEAFDEC has signed an MoU for collaborative work and cooperation. Infish conducted virtual training for Market analysis and Market Intelligence and held the 15th INFOFISH World Tuna Trade Workshop.

Infish's presentation is in **Annex 21**.

4. RPOA-IUU Observers

a. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-Office of Law Enforcement (NOAA-OLE)

NOAA-OLE explained that the PSMA focuses on fisheries inspection to monitor the traceability of fisheries product. NOAA-OLE highlighted the importance of cooperation and engagement on sharing data about suspicious fishing vessels. NOAA-OLE representatives explained it has been working on law enforcement with the partners including SEAFDEC and RPOA-IUU. Representatives reported on recent capacity building activities, technical assistance, and workshops in Southeast Asian countries. NOAA-OLE planned to continue the collaboration with Southeast Asian countries through organizing workshops and training focused on practical, operational and in line with the criteria of PSMA. NOAA-OLE noted its commitment to enhancing law enforcement effort. NOAA-OLE is planning to conduct regional fisheries inspector training in Southeast Asia.

NOAA-OLE presentation is in **Annex 22**.

b. International Monitoring, Control, Surveillance (IMCS) Network

The representative of IMCS could not attend the meeting. The copy of presentation can be found in **Annex 23**.

c. Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reef, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF)

The representatives of CTI-CFF provided an update of their activities relating to combating IUU including through conducting a workshop on CDT for Coral Triangle countries and facilitating learning exchange through their learning site. Representative also explained the efforts of CTI-CFF to combat IUUF through strengthening the capacity of CTI-CFF EAFM Technical Working Group. CTI-CFF also planned to develop technical guidance for CTI-CFF CDT that is in line with the existing regional guidance of CT6 member countries.

CTI-CFF's presentation is in **Annex 24**.

d. ATSEA-2 Project

The ATSEA-2 project representative explained that project will provide support to regional and national efforts aimed at reducing IUU fishing, including building upon national responses. The ATSEA-2 project intends to conduct MCS training in line with RPOA-IUU ATS sub-regional group, and to support community-based surveillance in selected ATS sites. The representative also informed the CCM that ATSEA-2 has collaborated with Indonesia in supporting the program "Registered vessels from Indonesian Archipelagic Waters (R-VIA)". It was further reported that the ATSEA-2 project has facilitated the implementation of Timor-Leste's NPOA for IUU fishing and training on an Independent Monitoring System. The project has also made progress in Papua New Guinea in regard to a MCS reporting system. ATSEA-2 project stated its work would support the implementation of the RPOA-IUU Work Plan 2021, including finalizing a baseline-estimate IUU fishing and intelligence training in 2021.

ATSEA-2 project's presentation is in **Annex 25**.

e. CSIRO

A CSIRO representative reported on the regional project of developing analytical capacity, including regional training workshops with core areas e.g. anomaly detection, space and time modelling, and risk assessment. The representative gave an explanation of using illegal catch percentage by species to estimate illegal landings. CSIRO also reported the estimated volume and value of illegal fishing regionally, and updates to regional hotspots of illegal fishing. CSIRO representative highlighted the potential to adopt this method and its estimations guidelines regionally.

CSIRO's presentation is in **Annex 26**.

5. RPOA-IUU Issues: consideration/endorsement

5.1 Joint Statement

The Joint Statement was not endorsed at the CCM. Malaysia suggested the Joint Statement should not be legally binding. Vietnam and Philippines requested three (3) months to receive the approval from the Ministers. The RPOA-IUU Secretariat expects to receive final input from Viet Nam and Philippines by the end of February 2020.

The current version of the draft of Joint Statement is shown in **Annex 27**.

5.2 RPOA-IUU Resolution on Vessels Without Nationality in the RPOA area

The RPOA-IUU RVWN was not endorsed at the CCM. Vietnam sought more time for Minister's approval and questioned the RPOA-IUU's mandate to adopt such a resolution. The Philippines requested to delay the approval on Resolution on Vessels Without Nationality. Vietnam suggested to review a function of the Coordination Committee to adopt RVWN. Vietnam also reminded of the authority of the RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee to monitor and review the annual adopted RPOA-IUU Work Plan. The discussion will be continued by e-mail. The RPOA-IUU Secretariat expects to receive a final response from Vietnam and Philippines by the end of February 2020.

The current text of the RPOA-IUU RVNWN is shown in **Annex 28**.

6. RPOA-IUU workplan 2020: progress and further priorities

The progress and implementation of RPOA-IUU Workplan 2020 will be circulated to RPOA-IUU countries via email. RPOA-IUU Secretariat expected to receive feedback and comments on the progress and implementation of the workplan as provided by the RPOA-IUU Secretariat.

The draft progress and implementation of the RPOA-IUU Workplan 2020 is in **Annex 29**.

7. Development of RPOA-IUU workplan 2021: based on the above discussion and identification of priorities and opportunities

A draft version of the RPOA-IUU Workplan 2021 will be circulated via email after the 13th CCM. The Secretariat will seek comments on the draft workplan before finalizing it.

The RPOA-IUU Workplan 2021 is in **Annex 30**.

8. Next Meeting

The Australia delegation advised they would consider hosting the 14th RPOA-IUU CCM, should the Covid-19 situation allow for a return to in-person meetings. They suggested a decision on the approach to the meeting (in-person/virtual) be made at the earliest opportunity in 2021.

The Australia delegation suggested that the next United Nations International Day of IUU fishing (5 June 2021) may be a good opportunity to release the Joint Ministerial Statement of Re-commitment to the RPOA-IUU. The RPOA-IUU Secretariat will discuss and seek for advices from RPOA-IUU countries in regards to the Joint Ministerial Statement of Re-Commitment Meeting.

The date and location of the 11th MCS Sub-Regional Group Arafura and Timor Seas 2021 will be discussed after the 13th CCM.

Indonesia is considering its ability to host The 8th MCS Sub-Regional Group Southern and Eastern of South China Seas and Sulu Sulawesi Seas 2021.

9. Closing Session

Mr. Arip Hidayatulloh from the RPOA-IUU Secretariat delivered closing remarks and closed the meeting.
